

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00  
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 JUSE-00 AID-05  
/053 W

-----026755 090951Z /14

O R 090847Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6300  
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SOPN, PINT, KS, US  
SUBJECT: KOREAN PRESS REPORTS ON PAK TONG-SON

REF: SEOUL 7556 (P R 070923Z SEP 77)

SUMMARY: SEOUL PRESS, HAVING FINISHED STORIES ON ANNOUNCE-  
MET OF INDICTMENT OF PAK TONG-SON, SEPTEMBER 9 BEGAN TO  
REPORT FONMIN'S COMMENTS ON CASE. IN BRIEF, LATTER SAID  
ROKG HAS COOPERATED WITH USG AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE AND WILL  
CONTINUE TO, BUT ROKG CANNOT FORCE PAK TO RETURN TO U.S.  
AGAINST HIS WILL. END SUMMARY.

1. ON SEPTEMBER 8, BOTH MORNING VERNACULAR PAPERS CARRIED  
BRIEF FRONT-PAGE STORIES FROM WIRE SERVICES REPORTING  
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT IN WASHINGTON OF FORMAL INDICTMENT  
OF PAK TONG-SON BY FEDERAL GRAND JURY FOR MAIL FRAUD AND  
CONSPIRACY TO BRIBE. STORIES, WHICH WERE FROM AP WIRE  
SERVICE OR COMBINATION OF AP AND UPI STORIES, WERE  
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APPARENTLY RUN TO CATCH UP WITH SEPTEMBER 7 AFTERNOON  
PAPERS (REFTTEL), WHICH HAD GOT THE SCOOP. STORIES NOTE  
THAT EX-REP. HANNA WAS NAMED AS UNINDICTED CO-CONSPIRATOR,  
LIST NAMES OF EIGHT PRESENT AND FORMER SENATORS AND  
REPRESENTATIVES, AND NOTE ABOUT TEN MORE REPRESENTATIVES  
WERE INVOLVED.

2. AFTERNOON TONGA ILBO ALSO CARRIED ITS OWN COMBINATION OF AP AND AFP STORIES IN ITS SEOUL CITY EDITION. OTHER AFTERNOON PAPERS CARRIED ONLY BRIEF SUMMARIES OF FONMIN PAK TONG-JIN'S COMMENTS TO FOREIGN REPORTERS ON ARRIVAL FROM JAPAN.

3. FONMIN'S BRIEF COMMENTS ON PAK TONG-SON SEPTEMBER 7 WERE OVERTAKEN BY MORE DETAILED REMARKS HE MADE IN AFTERNOON OF NEXT DAY, IN INFORMAL TALK WITH REPORTERS. ON SEPTEMBER 9, BOTH VERNACULAR MORNING PAPERS REPORTED FONMIN'S COMMENTS ON FRONT PAGE, WITH HEADLINES EMPHASIZING THAT PAK TONG-SON MAY RETURN TO THE U.S. WHEN HE WISHES. JUDGING FROM MOST COMPLETE SUMMARY, WHICH APPEARED IN INDEPENDENT, CONSERVATIVE CHOSON ILBO, OVERALL TONE OF FONMIN'S REMARKS WAS STRAIGHTFORWARD.

4. SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

(A) OUR BASIC POSITION IS THAT PAK TONG-SON AFFAIR IS SOLELY (RESULT OF) THE PRIVATE ACTIVITIES OF MR. PAK AS A MERCHANT. ROKG HAS "A CERTAIN POSITION" BECAUSE PAK IS A KOREAN CITIZEN, BUT NO DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY. AS PAK HAS COME TO KOREA, WE ARE FULLY PREPARED TO HELP, IN LIGHT OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, BUT WE CAN COOPERATE ONLY WITHIN THE LIMITS OF OUR LAW AND ON BASIS OF INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE, DIPLOMATIC CUSTOM, AND OUR SOVEREIGNTY. WE CANNOT FORCE PAK TO GO TO U.S. AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAVE ALREADY SAID AS MUCH TO U.S. COUNTRIES OF THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM OF LAW FOLLOW THE PRINCIPLE OF NOT EXTRADITING THEIR OWN CITIZENS EVEN IF GUILTY OF A CRIME.

(B) IN THE KIM SANG-GUN CASE, OUR AMBASSADOR ASKED U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO LET SOMEONE MEET KIM BUT THEY REFUSED, CITING KIM'S WISHES. IF THAT IS RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, IT IS AWKWARD IF THOSE RIGHTS ARE APPLIED TO ONLY ONE SIDE. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT ALL-POWERFUL AND CANNOT IMPRISON PEOPLE AT WILL; I SAID THIS IN MY INTERVIEW YESTERDAY WITH THE JAPAN TIMES AND TO AN NBC REPORTER AT KIMPO AIRPORT. WE HAVE BEEN COOPERATING WITH THE INVESTIGATION SINCE LAST YEAR, "IN TERMS OF CONTENTS," SO THE U.S. CANNOT CALL US UNCOOPERATIVE.

(C) HAS THE U.S. SENT A FORMAL LETTER REQUESTING COOPERATION?

NOT THAT I'VE HEARD. (THEY'VE USED) REGULAR DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS TO REQUEST US TO PERSUADE MR. PAK TO RETURN TO THE U.S. WE TRIED, BUT HE SAID HE WOULDN'T

GO. I FEEL THAT THE U.S., BY INDICTING MR. PAK, HAS  
MADE HIM LESS LIKELY TO GO. I'VE HEARD THAT MR. PAK'S  
LAWYER IN THE U.S. ALSO TOLD MR. PAK NOT TO RETURN.

(D) WE WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WHERE WE CAN, BUT  
WE CANNOT ARREST HIM AND PUT HIM ON A PLANE.

(E) U.S. MEDIA KEEP SAYING ROKG IS TRYING TO COVER  
UP THE PAK AFFAIR . . . .

WHY SHOULD WE? I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY KEEP  
TRYING TO BLAME THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT FOR MR. PAK'S  
PRIVATE ACTIVITIES.

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(F) THE U.S. HAS NEVER SAID IT WOULD SEND INVESTIGA-  
TORS (TO SEOUL). MR. PAK HAS A COMMERCIAL PASSPORT GOOD  
UNTIL 1978, SO HE CAN GO WHENEVER HE WANTS.

5. MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR PAK SANG-YONG  
CONFIRMED ACCURACY OF CHOSON ILBO REPORT TO POLCOUNS  
ON EVENING SEPTEMBER 8, NOTING MOFA INFORMATION  
OFFICER HAD PROVIDED HIM A COPY OF THE ARTICLE RATHER  
THAN HIS USUAL BRIEFING ON FORMIN'S REMARKS.  
SNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**TAGS:** SOPN, PINT, PINS, KS, US, (PAK TONG-SON)  
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